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DEC 9

Broadcasting

®

FIRST IN TELEVISION CABLE RADIO SATELLITE

- CBS JOINS OVERNIGHT NEWS BATTLE /18
- COMPRESSION: CHANNELS MULTIPLY FASTER THAN PROGRAMING /28
- FCC TO SHIELD STATIONS FROM CANDIDATE SUITS /34

49

0 71486 01890 2

COST CONTAINMENT, NETWORK STYLE

'CHECKBOOK JOURNALISM' BOUNCES BACK

By Rich Brown

The early testimony in the celebrated rape trial of William Kennedy Smith last week was marked by the revelation that a key witness had been paid $40,000 by the syndicated tabloid show *A Current Affair*. Although the payment raised questions in the courtroom about the credibility of the witness, it failed to bring out the usual industry complaints that have been raised in the past over "checkbook journalism."

Last week's revelation was met with surprisingly little criticism from media watchers, said David Bartlett, president of the Radio-Television News Directors Association. One problem in speaking out against such practices could be that the issue of compensation has become a sticky one, he said.

"Is there a substantive difference between paying $150 for a limo drive or $40,000 for an interview? Yes, about $39,850. But does that constitute an ethical difference? I'm not sure I'm prepared to make that call," said Bartlett.

A spokesman for *A Current Affair* would not confirm that the show had paid $40,000 for exclusive rights to interview Anne Mercer, a friend of the alleged rape victim. "Sometimes we compensate for stories of interest to the public, and in so doing, we are no different from any other network or syndicated show of this type," said the spokesman.

Compensation remains a common practice at syndicated shows, said Av Westin, executive producer, *Inside Edition*. He estimated that a fee of some kind is paid out in about one-fourth of the 850 stories produced by *Inside Edition* each year. About half of those involve fees paid for exclusive rights, while the other half include reimbursement for travel expenses or lost work days. Westin said the program does not offer compensation to some convicted murderers.

"We clearly would have no difficulty in offering [Mercer] money," said Westin. "She is a critical witness to the events." ■

This Week

THE TRUTH ABOUT PROGRAM COSTS / 3
Despite the widespread belief that program costs are escalating out of control, reports from the networks suggest they have managed to reign in that expense. Substituting low-cost genres like reality shows for relatively expensive miniseries and hour-long dramas accounts for a big part of the effort.

PCS HEARING / 11
In an FCC hearing last week, 2-ghz microwave users objected to allocation of spectrum to cable television, telephone and other industries seeking to launch personal communications services. Chairman Alfred Sikes's response: "I'm not sure that what we have here is world-ending in nature."

NEWS AROUND THE CLOCK / 18
CBS News unveiled plans to launch an early-morning newscast in early 1992, joining NBC and ABC in an anchored overnight news business now dominated by CNN and All News Channel. The announcement coincides with the network's cancellation of *Nightwatch*.

COMPRESSED TIMETABLE / 28
TCI President John Malone's recent comment that compression to the home should be available in 18 to 24 months has sent a ripple through the industry. The timeframe is faster than many had thought, and it's an open question as to whether programers will be ready to fill the new channels.

STATION ADMONISHED FOR HOAX / 31
The FCC has characterized as "spontaneous, isolated" the broadcast of a false murder confession by KROQ-FM Los Angeles last year. The agency laid the blame for the hoax on two DJ's, but admonished the station in light of its responsibility to supervise employes.

FCC TO TAKE OVER OVERCHARGE CASES / 34
The FCC is expected this week to assert jurisdiction over enforcing the lowest-unit-charge law, a move that will pre-empt a plethora of candidate lawsuits against broadcasters. The agency is also likely to adopt new rules laying out broadcasters' obligations in providing candidates with "reasonable access" to the airwaves.

DREAMING OF A FLAT CHRISTMAS / 43
With this year's low projections for consumer holiday spending, broadcasters are hopeful that retailers' ad spending will at least match last year's. Some stations are reporting that sales are slightly up.

EBS MOVE TO DIGITAL / 48
The second of six FCC regional workshops on the Emergency Broadcast System could shed some light on costs and effectiveness of competing new EBS technology being proposed for adoption. Virtually settled, it seems, is that any new system will involve digital data.

Broadcasters clinging to hope of flat retail sales this season (p.43).

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At Deadline

JUST SAY NO

Taking firm and unprecedented stance against FCC's broadcast indecency policy, Evergreen Media's WLUP(AM) Chicago informed agency last week it would not pay $6,000 fine for allegedly indecent programing. "[N]one of the material broadcast is indecent," it said. Refusal means if FCC wants to press case it will have to get Justice Department to sue Evergreen in federal court. "We certainly will pursue it," said FCC official.

FULL WEEK FOR 'TODAY'

As expected, NBC announced it will restructure its Saturday morning children's lineup, filling 8-10 a.m. with *Saturday Today*, a seventh day of *Today*. Although not ruling out the possibility of using animated programing on Saturday morning, the network is counting on a strict lineup of live-action programing to attract children and teenagers. *Saturday Today* will debut on Aug. 1, 1992.

For other late-breaking news, see "In Brief," pages 72-73.

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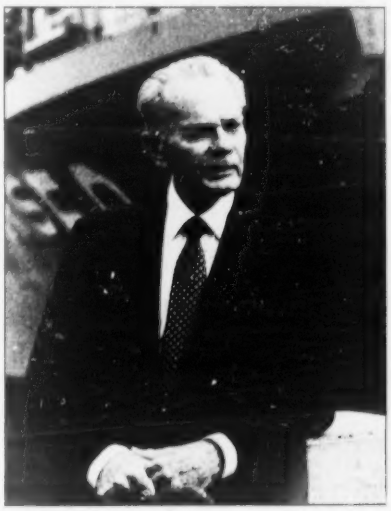

VIEWERS DRAWN TO PEARL HARBOR SPECIALS

Last week's glut of programing marking the 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor appears to have translated into a ratings success for television and radio stations across the country (BROADCASTING, Dec. 2).

While it was still too early at press time to know just how successful all the networks were in attracting audiences to their Pearl Harbor specials, a two-hour production by ABC News on Thursday won the night with a 24 share in the overnight ratings. Regularly scheduled programing on NBC scored a close second with a 23 share during the 8-10 p.m. period, while CBS lagged with a 14 share.

ABC's special, *Pearl Harbor: Two Hours that Changed the World*, was jointly produced with Japanese broadcaster NHK and featured host David Brinkley (left). Other specials were scheduled on the actual anniversary of the bombing last Saturday, including CBS's *Remember Pearl Harbor*, cohosted by General H. Norman Schwarzkopf and Charles Kuralt (right).

There had been some speculation that Japanese advertisers would be skittish about advertising on programing tied to the sensitive issue, and indeed none appeared on the first of the specials on ABC. But even with the absence of Japanese advertisers, ABC was able to sell out advertising on the special by late November, according to a network spokeswoman. -ks

The NBC three-day 'workout'

Network agrees to clean up credits clutter, hold affiliates meeting

By Geoffrey Foisie

NBC last week conducted an intensive three-day "workout" session between top management and several score affiliate executives that resulted in almost two dozen changes in operating procedure, some of which will be implemented immediately. NBC President Bob Wright also gave a presentation he intends to repeat this week in a closed-circuit telecast for all network affiliates.

The workout meeting, at the Ritz Carleton in Rancho Mirage, Calif., was based on a several-year-old General Electric management practice in which GE employes and customers can make specific suggestions on which GE management is required to make immediate yes-or-no decisions. Attendees included the NBC affiliate board, members of the affiliate promotion committee and the marketing advisory group.

Among the decisions made last week was to hold a two- to three-day affiliates meeting in Washington in March. Such a meeting had previously been canceled.

NBC also agreed to a proposal by affiliates to reduce the length of end-of-show credits as part of a larger ef-

Broadcasting's Ratings Week ⚡ Nov 25-Dec1

	ABC	CBS	NBC	FOX
MONDAY	13.7/20	18.3/27	16.1/24	NO PROGRAMING
8:00	66. Young Riders 8.1/12	13. Evening Shade 16.0/24	14. Fresh Prince 15.8/24	
8:30		11. Major Dad 16.5/24	20. Blossom 13.7/20	
9:00	17. NFL Monday Night Football—San Francisco 49ers at Los Angeles Rams 14.3/24	2. Murphy Brown 21.0/30	10. NBC Monday Night Movies—A Mother's Justice 16.7/25	
9:30		26. Memories of M*A*S*H 18.8/29		
10:00				
10:30				
TUESDAY	15.6/25	12.3/19	13.1/20	NO PROGRAMING
8:00	7. Full House 17.6/27	26. CBS Tuesday Night Movie—Honey, I Shrunk the Kids 12.6/19	34. I'll Fly Away 12.0/18	
8:30	8. Home Improvemt 17.4/26		21. In the Heat of the Night 13.6/20	
9:00	3. Roseanne 19.5/29			
9:30	9. Coach 17.2/26			
10:00	43. Homefront 10.9/19	35. Rescue: 911 11.8/20	21. Law and Order 13.6/23	
10:30				
WEDNESDAY	10.1/17	11.0/19	14.1/24	NO PROGRAMING
8:00	42. Dinosaurs 11.1/19	55. Brooklyn Bridge 9.1/15	11. Unsolved Mysteries 16.5/28	
8:30	44. Doogie Howser 10.8/18	60. Royal Family 8.5/14		
9:00	45. MTV 10 10.7/18	31. CBS Movie Special—The Wizard of Oz 12.3/21	28. Seinfeld 12.5/21	
9:30				
10:00	57. Civil Wars 8.6/15		41. Quantum Leap 11.2/20	
10:30				
THURSDAY	7.4/14	16.7/31	9.0/17	7.4/14
8:00	85. Pros and Cons 4.5/9	5. CBS Movie Special—E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial 18.4/34	49. Cosby 10.4/21	62. Simpsons 8.4/17
8:30			54. A Diffnt. World 9.5/18	78. Drexell's Class 6.3/12
9:00	80. FBI: Untold Stories 5.9/11		47. Cheers 10.5/19	73. Beverly Hills 90210 7.4/13
9:30	76. American Detect. 6.9/12		57. Wings 8.6/15	
10:00	39. Primetime Live 11.4/22	57. Brooklyn Bridge 8.6/18	71. L.A. Law 7.5/15	
10:30				
FRIDAY	10.6/19	12.1/22	11.6/21	4.9/9
8:00	36. Family Matters 11.6/21	36. Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer 11.6/21	25. Matlock 13.1/23	79. Simpsons 6.0/11
8:30	45. Step By Step 10.7/19			85. Charlie Hoover 4.5/8
9:00	64. Perfect Strngrs 8.2/14	31. Circus of the Stars 12.3/22		83. In Living Color 5.2/9
9:30	68. Baby Talk 7.7/14			87. Herman's Head 3.8/7
10:00	26. 20/20 12.6/24		56. Reasonable Doubts 8.7/16	
10:30				
SATURDAY	7.8/14	9.1/16	12.0/22	5.6/10
8:00	70. Who's the Boss? 7.6/13	53. CBS Saturday Movie—The Burbs 9.6/17	33. Golden Girls 12.2/22	75. Cops 7.1/13
8:30	71. Growing Pains 7.5/13		47. Walter & Emily 10.5/18	64. Cops 2 8.2/14
9:00	74. TheYoung Riders 7.3/13		19. Empty Nest 13.8/24	87. Charlie Hoover 3.8/7
9:30			28. Nurses 12.5/22	89. Get A Life 3.1/5
10:00	62. The Commish 8.4/16	67. P.S. I Luv U 8.0/15	38. Dame Edna's Hollywood 11.5/22	
10:30				
SUNDAY	13.2/20	17.9/27	9.7/15	8.7/13
7:00	49. Life Goes On 10.4/16	1. 60 Minutes 23.7/36	81. Eerie, Indiana 5.6/9	77. True Colors 6.8/11
7:30			84. The Torkelsons 5.0/8	68. Parker Lewis 7.7/12
8:00	16. Am Fun Home Vid 15.0/21	6. Murder, She Wrote 18.0/26	60. Hot Country Nights 8.5/12	39. In Living Color 11.4/16
8:30	15. Am Fun People 15.7/22			51. Roc 9.7/14
9:00	21. ABC Sunday Night Movie—Big 13.6/21	24. CBS Sunday Movie—Hallmark's: One Against the Wind 13.4/21	30. NBC Sunday Night Movie—Fatal Friendship 12.4/19	18. Married w/Childn 14.0/20
9:30				51. Herman's Head 9.7/14
10:00				82. Sunday Comics 5.3/8
10:30				
WEEK'S AVGS	11.3/19	14.2/23	12.1/14	7.1/12
SSN. TO DATE	12.2/20	14.0/23	12.7/21	7.7/13

RANKING/SHOW (PROGRAM RATING/SHARE) *PREMIERE SOURCE: A.C. NIELSEN YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT

Changing Hands

This week's tabulation of station and system sales ($250,000 and above)

KTMA-TV Minneapolis □ Sold by estate of KTMA Acquisition Corp., debtor, to Sonlight Television Inc. for $3.3 million. Terms: $2.5 million cash at closing and $800,000 three-year noninterest-bearing note. **Seller** is headed by Don Johnston, trustee, and has no other broadcast interests. **Buyer** is headed by Robert Beale (55% voting stock) and Linda R. Brook, and has no other broadcast interests. KTMA-TV is independent on ch. 23 with 1740 kw visual, 174 kw aural and antenna 1,150 feet above average terrain.

WTLJ(TV) Muskegon (Grand Rapids-Kalamazoo-Battle Creek), Mich. □ Sold by Video Mall Communications to Tri-State Christian TV Inc. for $1.5 million. Terms: $1.47 million cash at closing and $30,000 escrow deposit. **Seller** is headed by Marvin D. Sparks, and is also licensee of WTJC(TV) Springfield, Ohio. **Buyer** is headed by Garth W. Coonce, and has application pending for purchase of WGGH(AM) Marion, Ill. It is licensee of WTCT(TV) Marion, Ill.; WAQP(TV) Saginaw, Mich.; WNYB-TV Buffalo and WINM(TV) Angola, Ind., and is licensee or permittee of several LPTV's. Coonce also heads Radiant Life Ministries, licensee of WLXI-TV Greensboro, N.C. WTLJ is independent on channel 54 with 4,395 kw visual, 440 kw aural and antenna 1,000 feet above average terrain.

WQPM-AM-FM Princeton, Minn. □ Sold by P.M. Broadcasting Co. to Segue Communications Corp. for $1.2 million. Approved sale to John V. Montgomery last year for $410,000 ("Changing Hands," Sept. 3, 1990) did not close. Terms: $260,000 escrow deposit, $740,000 cash at closing and $200,000 for four-year noncompete covenant. **Seller** is headed by Terrence P. Montgomery, and has no other broadcast interests. **Buyer** is headed by Paul B. Steigerwald (30% voting stock), former general manager and program director for Midwest Communications Inc.; he has no other broadcast interests. WQPM(AM) has contemporary country format on 1300 khz with 1 kw day, 83 w night. WQPM-FM simulcasts AM programing on 106.3 mhz with 3 kw and antenna 300 feet.

WPGR(AM) Philadelphia □ Sold by Kiss Ltd. to All Star Radio Inc. for $800,000. **Seller** is headed by Kenneth O'Keefe, and is licensee of WYXR(FM) Philadelphia; WPIT-AM-FM Pittsburgh; WXKS-AM-FM Everett-Medford, Mass.; WRFX(FM) Kanapolis, N.C.; WHTT-AM-FM Buffalo and WKQG(AM)-WPXY-FM Rochester, both New York. General partners in KISS Ltd. are also general partners in WNUA(AM) Chicago. **Buyer** is headed by Marina Kats, and has no other broadcast interests. WPGR has oldies format on 1540 khz; with 50 kw day.

KLEE(AM)-KOTM-FM Ottumwa, Iowa □ Sold by Kleeco Radio Inc. to FMC Broadcasting Inc. for $400,000 for terms payable in 20 years. **Seller** is headed by Gary Johnson, trust officer for Daniel C. Palen estate. Estate also owns 50% of WGLB-AM-FM Port Washington, Wis. **Buyer** is headed by Thomas A. Palen (100%) and Beverly Palen, wife of late Daniel Palen. Beverly Palen is currently vice president of Kleeco Radio. KLEE has country, news-talk format on 1480 khz 500 w day and 333 w night. KOTM-FM has contemporary hit format on 97.7 mhz with 6 kw and antenna 200 feet above average terrain.

WKXM-AM-FM Winfield, Ala. □ Sold by Ad Media Management Corp. to Harper-Mainord Broadcasting for $365,000, payable in 144 equal monthly installments. Stations were purchased in 1989 for $142,500 when WKXM-FM was not yet on air; application for license is pending. **Seller** is headed by James B. Pate, and has no other broadcast interests. **Buyer** is owned by general partners Maxine Harper (67%) and Jack Mainord (33%), and has no other broadcast interests. WKXM(AM) has country format on 1300 khz with 5 kw day and 30 w night. WKXM-FM has oldies format on 105.9 mhz with 3 kw and antenna 328 feet above average terrain.

PROPOSED STATION TRADES

By volume and number of sales

This Week:

AM's □ $1,172,509 □ 6
FM's □ $10,000 □ 1
AM-FM's □ $2,140,000 □ 4
TV's □ $4,800,000 □ 2
Total □ $8,122,509 □ 13

Year to Date:

AM's □ $71,290,508 □ 246
FM's □ $211,603,609 □ 264
AM-FM's □ $330,086,849 □ 202
TV's □ $1,058,904,400 □ 79
Total □ $1,671,885,366 □ 791

For 1990 total see Jan. 7, 1991 BROADCASTING.

CLOSED!

WTKN-AM/WHVE-FM, Tampa, Florida from Susquehanna Radio Corporation to Paxson Broadcasting, Inc., for $7.3 million.

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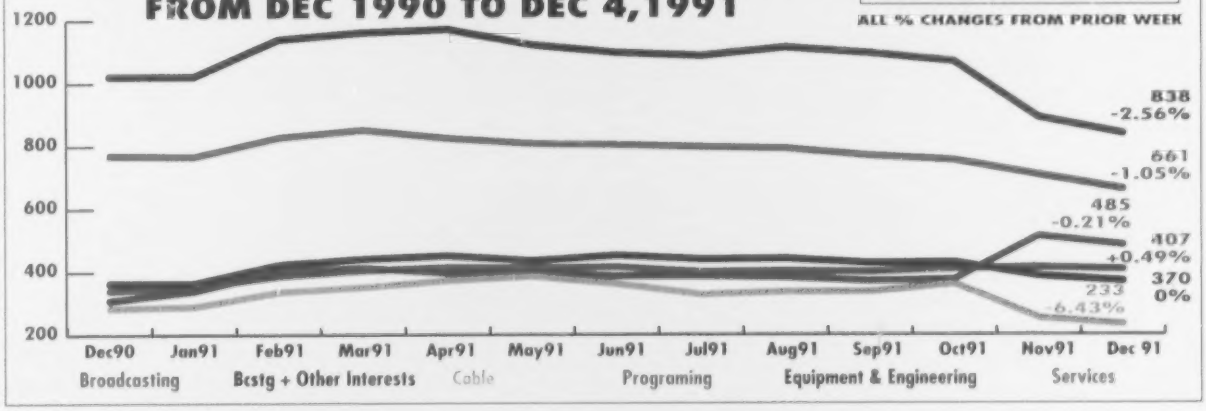
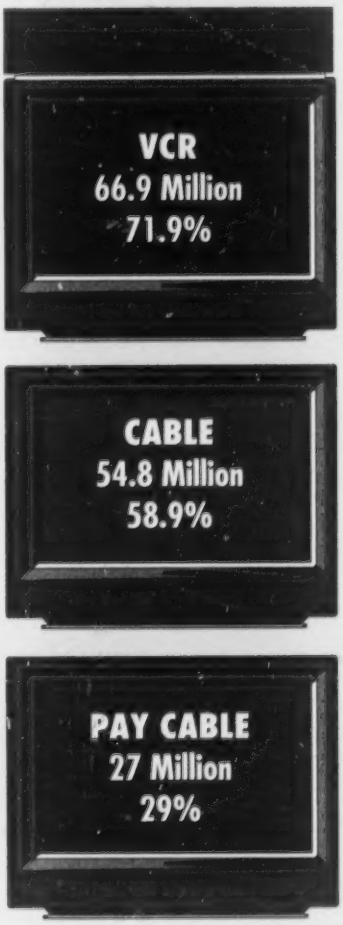
Broadcasting's By The Numbers

STOCK MARKET PERFORMANCE AVERAGES FROM DEC 1990 TO DEC 4,1991

NASDAQ: 535.28 (+2.49%)
S&P Ind.: 447.83 (+0.44%)
ALL % CHANGES FROM PRIOR WEEK



NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH VCR'S, CABLE AND PAY CABLE



Source: TVB and A.C. Nielsen

SUMMARY OF BROADCASTING & CABLE

BROADCASTING

Service	ON AIR	CP's[1]	TOTAL*
Commercial AM	4,988	235	5,223
Commercial FM	4,539	1,009	5,548
Educational FM	1,497	311	1,808
Total Radio	**11,024**	**1,555**	**12,579**
Commercial VHF TV	556	16	572
Commercial UHF TV	575	168	743
Educational VHF TV	124	4	128
Educational UHF TV	233	12	245
Total TV	**1,488**	**200**	**1,688**
VHF LPTV	230	149	379
UHF LPTV	738	794	1,532
Total LPTV	**968**	**943**	**1,911**
FM translators	1,878	363	2,241
VHF translators	2,701	79	2,658
UHF translators	2,338	320	2,658

CABLE

Total subscribers	56,072,840
Homes passed	87,433,000
Total systems	11,135
Household penetration†	61%
Pay cable penetration/basic	79%

* Includes off-air licenses. † Penetration percentages are of TV household universe of 93.1 million.
[1] Construction permit. [2]Instructional TV fixed service. [3]Studio-transmitter link.
Source: Nielsen, NCTA and Broadcasting's own research.

Broadcasting In Brief

Both CBS and NBC made prime time changes last week, with NBC bringing back *Pacific Station* and CBS slotting two new series on its troubled Friday night. NBC is pulling *Flesh 'N Blood* from the 9-9:30 slot on Friday and is bringing back *Pacific Station* effective Dec. 20. The series, starring Robert Guillaume, will be paired with *Dear John* at 9:30. NBC said *Flesh 'N Blood* will return later. CBS is adding two dramas to its Friday lineup with *Tequila & Bonetti* (formerly *Tequila & Boner*), premiering Jan. 17 at 9, and *Hearts Are Wild*, premiering Jan. 10. at 10. The network still needs to schedule permanent programing in the 8-9 hour on Friday but in the interim will fill the time with specials and *Rescue: 911*. Two episodes of that show air in the 8-9 slot on Jan. 24 and 31 before a replacement begins airing in February.

LBS Communications, in a move previously anticipated by creditors (BROADCASTING, July 8 and Nov. 25), **filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection** in New York late last week. According to the court filings, LBS says it has entered into a merger agreement with All American Communications, also been expected by industry observers. In the court filing, LBS's total assets are put at $30.5 million, while the New York-based syndicator has posted liabilities of slightly under $68.5 million. An All American spokesperson declined comment on the terms of the merger, but it is reported that the company is making an asset purchase of LBS's syndicated programing, including *Family Feud* and *Baywatch*.

NSS POCKETPIECE

(Nielsen's top ranked syndicated shows for the week ending Nov. 10. Numbers represent aggregate rating average/stations/% coverage)

1. Star Trek	15.4/246/98
2. Wheel Of Fortune	14.8/222/98
3. Oprah Winfrey Show	11.5/223/98
4. Entertainment Tonight	9.1/185/96
5. Current Affair	8.9/171/93
6. Imagination !	8.9/184/96
7. Cosby Show	8.8/208/97
8. Wheel of Fortune (Wknd)	8.4/186/82
9. Married...With Children	7.7/168/94
10. Donahue	7.0/229/98
10. Inside Edition	7.0/124/86
12. Sally Jessy Raphael	5.7/207/87
13. Hard Copy	5.6/168/91
14. Entertainment Ton. (wknd)	5.0/183/95
15. Street Justice	5.0/137/91

As soon as **Turner Broadcasting System completed its $320 million acquisition of Hanna-Barbera Productions** on Dec. 4, **pink slips were sent out the next day to 92 domestic and 23 international employes** out of 430 people on the payroll at the Hollywood animation house. A TBS spokesperson said, "Like most other mergers, there was a duplication of positions and responsibilities open for elimination."

Iowa State University has hired media broker The Ted Hepburn Co. to find a buyer for its WOI-TV Ames, Iowa, ABC affiliate. ISU President Martin Jischke did not disclose the asking price, but said it is "somewhat lower" than the $20 million at which the station was valued in 1986, according to the *Ames Daily Tribune*. The paper said that to remain viable, the station, which trails the affiliates in ratings, would have to move 28 miles south to Des Moines, the market in which it competes.

John Quinn, president-GM, WJDM(AM) Elizabeth, N.J., confirmed last week that he **is also a candidate for the hotly contested District 2 seat** (serving New York and New Jersey) on the NAB radio board ("Top of the Week," Dec. 2). Quinn, an active participant in NAB's program to promote its AMAX consumer radios, said AM improvement and digital audio broadcasting will be key issues for the new radio board next June. Former board member William O'Shaughnessy of WVOX(AM)-WRTN(FM) New Rochelle, N.Y., and Mark Bench of

ANOTHER SIDE TO THE CHAIRMAN

You can still get conflicting opinions about Alfred Sikes as chairman of the FCC, but there was a consensus following his performance at a Federal Communications Bar Association dinner in Washington last Thursday evening that he is making real progress as a stand-up comic. Sikes put all seriousness aide, hoping to amuse the several hundred lawyers, lobbyists and government officials with a routine of mostly inside jokes. Noting the FCC's chronic troubles in getting adequate funding, Sikes said the FCC would be instituting a new revenue-raising gimmick. Starting Jan. 1, there will be only one phone line into the commission: 1-900-PHONE-AL. That's $100 for the first minute, $50 for each additional minute. But the first 25 callers get a bonus: a free savings and loan and a daytime AM station.

Sikes presented his Profiles in Courage Award to the Japanese owners of major movie studios, who are remaking "Tora Tora Tora" with a new title: "Hands Across the Pacific." Collegiality is as robust as ever, according to Sikes. Commissioner Ervin Duggan has suggested a rotating chairmanship, Sikes said. "But Ervin didn't say exactly what I should be rotating on." Sikes also said he is getting along better with Commissioner Sherrie Marshall. In fact, they are colloborating on a movie script about a "young, dynamic, good-looking" head of a federal regulatory agency who overcomes all odds to do what's right for the public. The only dispute is over casting. Sikes envisions Mel Gibson and Roseanne Arnold in the leads; Marshall, Michelle Pfeiffer and Danny DeVito. —RAJ